GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

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Scientific Culture in Society
Mahendran Shri C.;Natterjee Shri J. Jayasingh Thiyagaraj

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether science and scientific culture has penetrated India"s socio-culturally diverse society to transform it into a nation of scientifically thinking and scientifically aware people; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the proactive steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY)

(a) Yes Madam. Science and technology have been an integral part of Indian civilization and culture over the past several millennia. India has been the fountainhead of important foundational scientific developments and approaches. These cover many great scientific discoveries and technological achievements in mathematics, astronomy, architecture, chemistry, metallurgy, medicine, natural philosophy and other areas. A great deal of this travelled outwards from India. Equally, India also assimilated scientific ideas and techniques from elsewhere, with open-mindedness and a rational attitude characteristic of a scientific ethos.

(b) Scientific Temper has always decided the level of development in the country. Therefore it has received sustained support of government policy. Since Independence, India has been committed to the task of promoting the spread of science. The Scientific Policy Resolution of 1958 and the Technology Policy Statement of 1983 enunciated the principles on which the growth of science and technology in India has been based over the past several decades. A key objective of our Science and Technology Policy 2003 is to ensure that the message of science reaches every citizen of India, man and woman, young and old, so that we advance scientific temper, emerge as a progressive and enlightened society, and make it possible for all our people to participate fully in the development of science and technology and its application for human welfare. Support for wide dissemination of scientific knowledge is extended to convey to the young the excitement in scientific and technological advances and to instill scientific temper in the population at large. Support is provided for programmes that seek to popularize and promote science and technology in all parts of the country.

In 2013, Government of India has released a new science, technology and innovation policy. Key Elements include - promoting the spread of scientific temper amongst all sections of society, enhancing skill for applications of science among the young from all social strata, making careers in science, research and innovation attractive enough for talented and bright minds. Department of Science & Technology, through National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC) also plays a key role in promoting scientific temper and communicating science and technology among fellow citizen. With a view to popularize S&T and stimulate scientific and technological temper among people, the National Council of Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC) has taken major initiatives. Among them are the Bharat Jan Vigyan Jathas (BJVJ) and a number of other initiatives aimed at reaching large number of people across the country.

Alongside promoting the required expertise & manpower development in the area of science communication, it implements mass awareness initiatives like Science Express, and also the National Children's Science Congress. NCSTC also recognizes national excellence in science communication and improve the public understanding of science.

In post-Independent days, the government had a single ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs and during fifties the science museums came into being, now functioning under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. National Council for Science Museums (NCSM) administers 26 Science Centres/Museums/Planetariums spread all over India while 15 more have been developed and handed over. Science City, Kolkata, Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (BITM), Kolkata, Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai, Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum (VITM), Bengaluru and National Science Centre, Delhi are National level centres of NCSM. All having its Regional centres and District Level Centres called Satellite Units (SUs).

National Institute for Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) is an institute set up under Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Department of Scientific & Industrial Research for serving the society using modern IT infrastructure in a more effective manner and taking up new ventures in the field of science communication, dissemination and S&T information management systems and services. Broadly the core activity of NISCAIR are to collect/store, publish and disseminate S&T information through a mix of traditional and modern means, which will benefit different segments of society.

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